

Agenda Item No:	7	
Committee:	Cabinet	
Date:	19 March 2020	
Report Title:	My Fenland Progress Update	

1 Purpose / Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide Cabinet with an update on progress relating to the My Fenland Transformation Programme. The My Fenland Programme focusses on modernising the way the Council delivers key aspects of services to our customers, ensuring we are putting the customer journey first and providing the best possible customer experience.

2 Key issues

- This is an opportunity for Fenland and a chance for the Council to further improve its customer focussed approach to service delivery.
- Our customers are telling us both directly and indirectly, that they want to access services in a manner of their choice and at a convenient time for them, rather than predominantly via the current traditional face-to-face model.
- At their peak in 2005 the Customer Services One Stop Shops served in excess of 195,000 customers face to face. This had reduced to 32,000 in 2019, a reduction of over 84% in 14 years. In the same time period however the number of hits to the Council's website has increased from 90,000 to 650,000 an increase of 622%
- During the same time frame there have been great advances in technology, which can enable customers to access services independently, 'self-serving' which in turn releases staff capacity and realises cashable savings.
- A key milestone for the My Fenland project is the implementation of Phase 1. Phase 1 of the project draws together the administrative and customer focussed roles from Customer Services with back office teams within the Communities, Environment and Leisure Support Team and the Economic Growth and Assets teams in to a combined team to allow for improved and cohesive service delivery. Job roles are not anticipated to change significantly within this first phase to allow for continued business continuity.
- Following on from the initial phase it is anticipated that within Phase 2 roles will be updated and adapted from later in 2020.

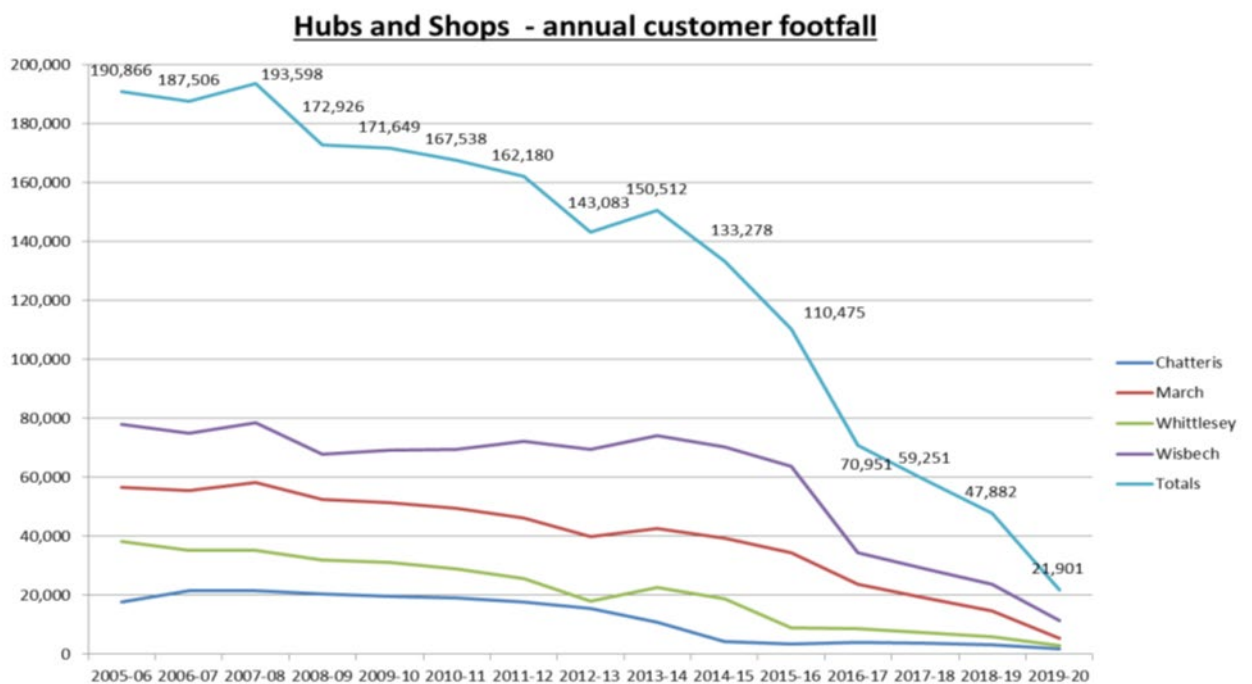
3 Recommendations

For Cabinet to note the progress of the 'My Fenland' programme to date and endorse the activities contained within phases 1 and 2 of the programme.

Wards Affected	All
Forward Plan Reference	N/A
Portfolio Holder(s)	Cllr Steve Tierney – Portfolio Holder for Transformation
Report Originator(s)	<p>Peter Catchpole – Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer</p> <p>Anna Goodall – Head of Governance, Legal and Customer Services</p> <p>Sam Anthony – Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development</p> <p>David Wright – Communications Manager</p>
Contact Officer(s)	<p>Paul Medd – Chief Executive</p> <p>Peter Catchpole – Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer</p> <p>Anna Goodall – Head of Governance, Legal and Customer Services</p> <p>Sam Anthony – Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development</p> <p>David Wright – Communications Manager</p>
Background Paper(s)	

1. Background

- 1.1. The Council's dedicated Customer Service team has been in place since 2004. This service has seen a number of structural and operational reviews and the nature of work delivered to our customers has changed.
- 1.2. At their peak in 2005 the Customer Services One Stop Shops served in excess of 195,000 customers face to face. This had reduced to 32 000 in 2019, a reduction of over 84% in 14 years. In the same time period however the number of hits to the Council's web site has increased from 90,000 to 650,000 an increase of 622%



- 1.3. The indicative average costs per transaction type are as follows; Face to face £8.62, Telephone Contact £2.63 and each Web Transaction 15p.
- 1.4. The Council itself has also seen fundamental changes over the past 10 years, which also have changed the scope and the nature of the services it provides. As a result, the Council has a number of customer facing teams across the organisation. These teams include:
 - Customer Services (Customer Service Centres, CSC, and Contact Centre, CC)
 - Communities, Environment and Leisure Support Team
 - Business Premises Admin Support Team
 - Business Premises reception
 - Admin Support Team in Engineers and Assets
- 1.5. Consequently customers direct their enquiries to different teams within the Council. There are more efficient ways of working available if these teams have a common purpose to jointly transact the different administrative tasks that are currently being

undertaken separately. An initial review of customer facing services has revealed a number of issues which will be addressed as part of the My Fenland transformational programme. Those issues include

- A significant volume of manual processing undertaken by each team.
- The customer entry point is not always clear.
- A need to improve resilience and a better support to technical and professional services in order to improve our service to customers.
- How to access our customer services is not well published.
- There are approximately 15 different IT systems in operation and we can better assess how we are currently utilising technology to serve our customers better.
- Customers at our One Stop Shops are taken through manual process in person; through an online form and not currently signposted to electronic channels.
- There are two customer access points at The Boathouse, Wisbech, which causes confusion for customers. As a result the Business Reception staff at the Boathouse currently greets One Stop Shop (OSS) customers when they come into reception, and then direct them back outside the building and round the corner to go into the OSS.
- Our One Stop Shop staff currently have a proportion of unproductive time waiting for customers, with limited scope to undertake extra work; meanwhile other 'back office' administration teams who also deliver direct services to the public are currently carrying vacancies, experiencing capacity issues.

1.6. The My Fenland Programme was established as a means of reviewing all services and processes to ensure customers are at the heart of any future approach to delivering services. In addition another key objective of the programme is that we make the best use of the technology available to ensure the efficient delivery of services whilst also providing customers with a greater choice about how, when and where they are able to access services.

2. Progress

2.1. The My Fenland Programme has been separated into 3 distinct implementation phases. This is to ensure the various projects contained within the programme are effectively managed. It is also vital to ensure that the changes this programme will result in are communicated to our customers and staff to ensure engagement and understanding.

2.2. Phase 1

2.3. The delivery stage of the My Fenland project has now begun with the appointment of temporary project posts, including; the Implementation Manager, Business Improvement Officers and Web Administrator.

2.4. The first key milestone for My Fenland will be as early as possible in Summer 2020 when the My Fenland Team will commence working together. Phase 1 will consolidate all the services identified in paragraph 1.3 above, into one 'My Fenland' customer team and all customer service activities will be incorporated in this move.

This is an important step and will help staff to identify as part of 'My Fenland' and become one cohesive customer focussed team. This move will further build in resilience, eliminating single points of failure as well as building on the Council's 'One Team' culture.

- 2.5. As with previous change processes, we will support staff through a carefully planned programme from April 2020. This will be supplemented by team briefings, training and communications. The support programme will include a series of workshops focussing on how staff engage with and effectively manage change in addition to positive mindset training.
- 2.6. This phase will ensure that customers no longer have to identify which team to contact for the majority of services, as the services contained in phase 1 will be accessed from the new My Fenland Team.
- 2.7. It is also important to note that Phase 1 will not include any staff restructures. Clear, regular and consistent communication with staff will be imperative to ensure success and is being carefully planned to ensure key messages are delivered in a managed, timely way.
- 2.8. There are currently 46 posts (Inc. vacant posts) within Customer Services, the Business Premises & Assets Technical team and the Environmental Services Support team, comprising full-time and part-time roles.
- 2.9. During Phase 1 the My Fenland team will be managed by the Customer Services Manager and supported by the Implementation Manager in addition to the Head of Service for Governance, Legal and Customer Services and the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development. An additional supervisor will be employed for six months to support this wider team.
- 2.10. In addition to staff management and office moves, Phase 1 will also focus on identifying and implementing the technology needed to improve the service the Council is able to provide to its customers and to make those services more efficient particularly for high demand services. They have been prioritised due to the benefits that they will bring to this transformation programme. Once implemented, each new process will release capacity.
- 2.11. During the summer we will introduce PayPoint / Post Office Pay facilities across the district. This will be a substantial improvement for our customers as it will significantly increase the number of venues customers will be able to pay a council bill by cash or card, as any Paypoint facility can be utilised, therefore increasing accessibility in a rural area. The implementation of Paypoint will be a major catalyst for meaningful changes as customers will no longer need to come into a Council building to pay a bill by cash or card and therefore customer footfall is anticipated to reduce further, releasing staff capacity.
- 2.12. Phase 2 will include the ability to adapt to changes to customer behaviours that might result from the benefits to customers of Paypoint for cash or card transactions.

- 2.13. We are also seeking to implement a link between the Bartec 'In Cab' software, which is in the refuse Lorries and ensures the refuse teams know which bins to collect and which households require assisted collections, and the Council website.
- 2.14. The potential introduction of the integration between Bartec and the website will enable customers to self-serve, via our website. We will use this initially to focus on activities like reporting a missed bin, ordering a new or replacement bin, which are high demand service requests. Again, we know that our current processes are not as efficient as they could be, being labour intensive. This introduction will ultimately reduce the number of calls to the contact centre and face-to-face visits, as customers will also be able to self-serve updates to their request, effectively managing their expectations and further freeing up existing resources.
- 2.15. An upgrade to our contact centre telephony software will enable us to route all customer contacts including calls, emails and web chat via one central 'My Fenland' team, better supporting customers to utilise the website as well as enabling more effective tracking and monitoring of customer transactions in a more efficient way. This will facilitate enhanced performance monitoring, in turn delivering a better experience at the point of access. The upgrade will also introduce light touch Customer Relationship Manager (CRM) software, which will enable greater consistency, transparency and a reduction of the customer having to repeat information on multiple occasions. This will provide us with data about how and why customers contact us to help forecast future demand, project future staffing levels and manage website developments proactively.
- 2.16. The introduction of further links between the website and back office systems will be further considered to allow customers to self-serve in relation to services such as licensing, building on the successful launch of this service by Private Sector Housing for the Licensing of Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO's).
- 2.17. The implementation of the above technology will result in a stepped change regarding how the majority of our customers access services as well as the response they receive, which will free up staff capacity in preparation for Phase 2 of the My Fenland Programme.

2.18. **Phases 2 & 3**

- 2.19. Phase 2 of the 'My Fenland' Programme will concentrate on customer interactions and activities, and all opportunities for customers to access services how, where and when they chose across different service teams, looking at opportunities for streamlining.
- 2.20. The programme will seek to realise the benefits of the technology implemented during phase 1 as this will undoubtedly release staff capacity as customers migrate towards the website, where appropriate.
- 2.21. As a result of the investment in technology and anticipated further changes in customer behaviour, we will be in a position to undertake an analysis of the assets and resources required to deliver the future functions of the service. A further review of how the OSS and CSC's are utilised will also take place to ensure opening hours reflect customer demand.

3. Finances/ Savings

In anticipation of the My Fenland project, the Council has a number of vacancies in teams that it has not permanently recruited to which due to the changes outlined above will not be necessary in future. This will produce the savings set out in Phase 1 below, even after these savings are offset by the cost of the temporary posts referred to in section 2. With the roll out of the project through future phases, it is estimated that further savings will be possible as set out below. These figures are indicative at this time and Members will be updated on progress as the Council moves through this project.

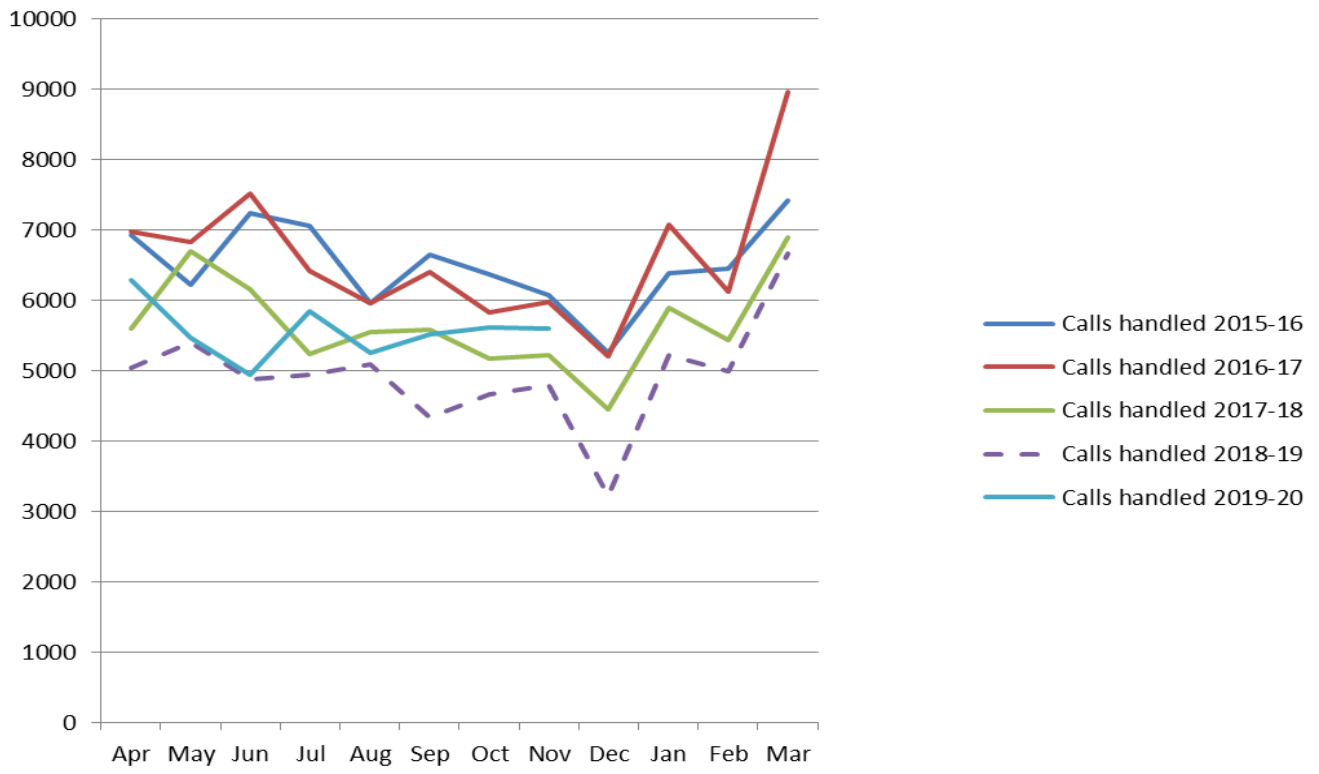
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Phase 1 Net Saving	£9,234	£115,298	£115,298	£115,298	£115,298
Phase 2 Net Saving	£148,269	£296,538	£296,538	£296,538	£296,538
Annual Total Net Saving	£157,503	£411,836	£411,836	£411,836	£411,836
Cumulative Total	£157,503	£569,339	£981,175	£1,393,011	£1,804,847

4. Summary / Benefits

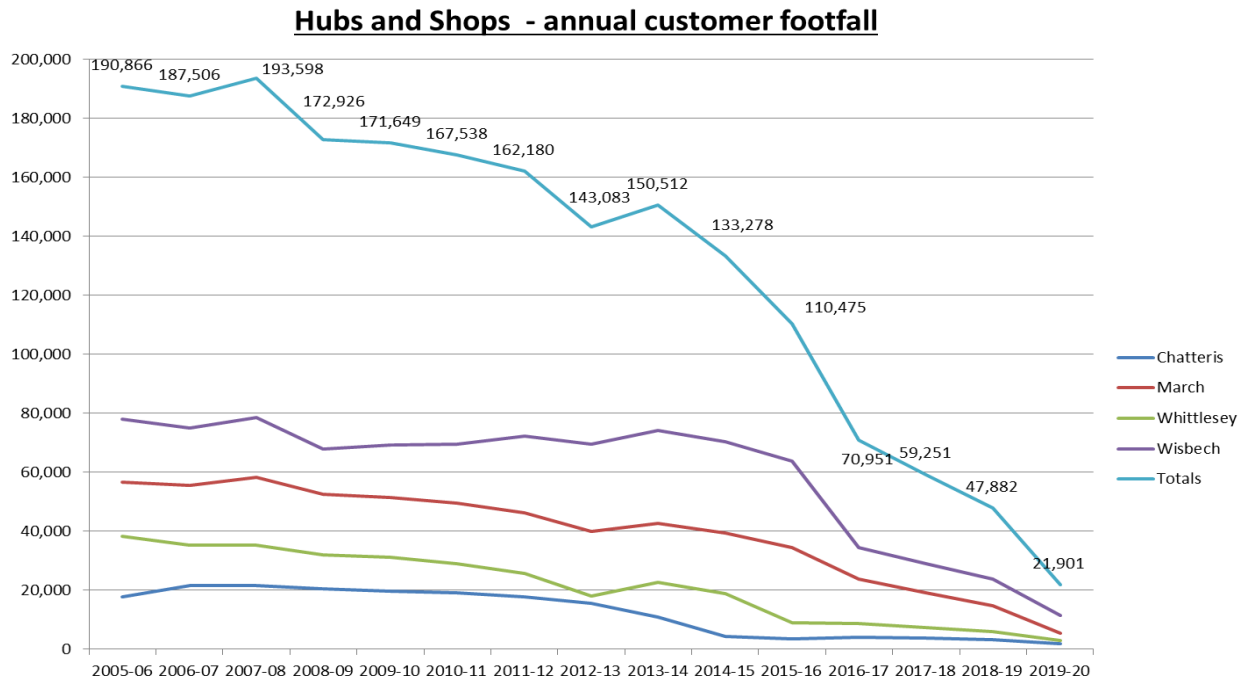
4.1. There will be clear benefits associated with this proposed delivery model:

- An improved customer experience
- Supportive environment for teams to integrate into My Fenland
- Enable better working 'right first time' service for the customer
- Smarter ways of working
- A more joined-up approach across the organisation
- Improved compliance with GDPR responsibilities
- Streamlining process and stages
- Improving services, driving down costs
- Increased number of locations accepting cash/ card payments for bills
- Better consistency and a more consolidated customer service
- The opportunity to explore and introduce new technology to streamline and facilitate the customer journey (where appropriate)
- Better resilience for all such teams, and therefore a more consistent and effective customer service
- Integrating a range of discreet/defined services in to the 'My Fenland' team, as a single point of contact and delivery
- Better staff attraction and retention
- Better learning and development opportunities.
- Releasing capacity within existing teams and utilising this capacity to improve the customer experience

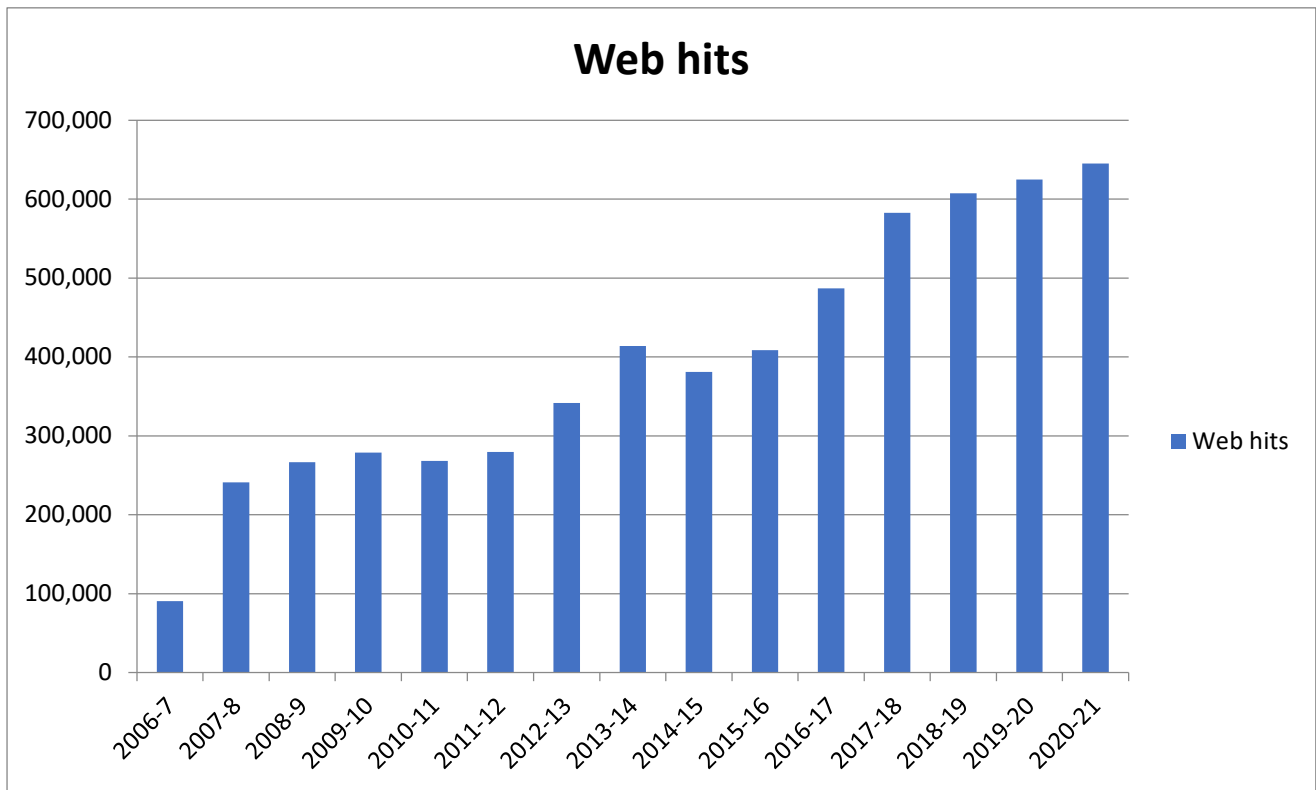
5. Appendix 1 Contact Centre Annual calls Handled



7 Appendix 2 Community Hub and Customer Service Centre Annual Footfall



7. Appendix 3 Web Hits annual figures



8. Appendix 4 Pay- Point Locations

In addition to the information contained within the table below regarding the proximity of Paypoint locations across each of the Parishes within Fenland, there are also

Currently 4 Paypoint locations within Chatteris

6 Paypoint locations within March

3 Paypoint locations within Whittlesey

15 Paypoint locations within Wisbech

Parish	Closest Store distance in miles (One way)	Current Distance in miles to closest Fenland District Council Offices (One way)	Closest Store	Address
Benwick	6.5	7.4	Limat Stores	48 High Street, Chatteris
Chatteris	0.03	0.03	Nisa Local	5 Park Street, Chatteris
Christchurch	7.3	8.4	The Co-operative Food	Badgeney Road
Doddington	0.9	6.0	Sisco Service Station	46a Doddington Road
Elm	1.23	3.0	Costcutter	140 Elm Road
Gorefield	2.0	3.8	Leverington Stores	Church End
Leverington	0.03	2.0	Leverington Stores	Church End
Manea	0.07	6.4	One Stop	1 Park Road
March	0.08	0.08	David's Newsagents	9 High Street
Newton-in-the-isle	2.7	4.6	Leverington Stores	Church End
Parson Drove	4.1	7.2	McColls	McColls Hillgate
Tydd St Giles	3.5	6.3	Sutton St James Conv. Store	57-59 Chapelgate
Whittlesey	0.04	0.04	Co-op - Whittlesey	763 Blunts Lane
Wimblington	0.47	4.7	Sisco Service Station	46a Doddington Road
Wisbech	0.18	0.18	Premier Store	195-197 Norwich Road
Wisbech St Mary	3.8	4.0	Leverington Stores	Church End